

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 EUR-12 /076 W
-----190649Z 110009 /10

R 181329Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3163
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY SANA

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 1636

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ET, SA
SUBJ: SAUDI-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS AND HORN OF AFRICA

REF: JIDDA 2059 (NOTAL, JIDDA 1357 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY HAS READ JIDDA 2059 WITH INTEREST AND WISHES TO
MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS WITH RESPECT TO ANY ADVICE WE MAY WISH TO
GIVE SAG ON ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA.

A) IN AFRICAN CONTEXT, CONCEPT OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IS STILL
STRONG, AND OPEN OR PERCEIVED OPEN SUPPORT BY SAG FOR ERITREAN
INDEPENDENCE WOULD NOT MAKE SAUDIS MANY FRIENDS IN AFRICA.

B) THE SAG ROLE IS ALREADY HIGHLY SUSPECT BY THE EPMG, AND FUR-
THER ESPOUSAL OF ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE WILL FORFEIT ANY POSSI-
BILITY OF IMPROVED SAG RELATIONS WITH EPMG. SAUDIS (AND THE
U.S.) ARE GENERALLY VIEWED HERE AS GRAY EMINENCES BEHIND SUDAN
AND PRESENT ARAB "RED SEA SECURITY" MOVES. IN VIEW EPMG'S AP-

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PARENT SUSPICIONS OF U.S. ROLE BEHIND SAUDIS, INCREASED SAG
SUPPORT FOR ERITREAN REBELS COULD HAVE IMPACT ON USG-EPMG RE-
LATIONS. (COMMENT: WHILE MOFA'S DIRECTOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS WHO
ONE OF EPMG'S LEADING SPOKESMEN ON THIS SUBJECT HAS ASSURED
CHARGE THAT EPMG KNOWS USG IS NOT BEHIND SUDANESE, SUCH IS NOT
TONE AND IMPLICATION OF MEDIA OUTPUT OR SPEECHES BY DIRG
MEMBERS. (END COMMENT).

C) WHILE AFRICANS MAY BE LULLED BY SAG FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, OPTING TO SUPPORT AN "ARAB" CAUSE IN OPPOSITION TO AN "AFRICAN" CAUSE MAY WELL CONTRIBUTE TO ALREADY NOTICEABLE AFRICAN DIS-ENCHANTMENT WITH ARAB WORLD IN GENERAL.

2. EPMG ABILITY TO CONTROL SITUATION IN ERITREA OR ELSEWHERE IN ETHIOPIA HAS NOT RADICALLY CHANGED IN PAST SIX MONTHS. EPMG STILL OCCUPIES ALL PRINCIPAL TOWNS IN ERITREA AND WHILE ETHIOPIAN ARMY NOT LIKELY TO ACTIVELY ATTEMPT SEEK OUT AND DESTROY INSURGENTS, THERE LITTLE DOUBT HERE THAT THEY CAN AND WILL EFFECTIVELY DEFEND THEMSELVES IF ATTACKED. EDU EFFORTS IN BEGEMDIR AND NORTH, IF VIEWED IN ISOLATION, PRESENTLY POSE ONLY MODEST MILITARY THREAT TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN PAST SIX MONTHS HAS BEEN DETERIORATION OF MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LOW-LANDS. IN SOUTH, EPMG HAS LOST CONSIDERABLE GROUND TO SOMALI-SUPPORTED INSURGENTS DUE TO INCREASED SOMALI EFFORTS, EPMG TROOP TRANSFERS TO ERITREA AND GENERAL SITUATION IN NORTH. AFAR AREAS HAVE BEEN AMAZINGLY QUIET FOR PAST YEAR, AND EMBASSY HAS DOUBTS AS TO PRESENT EFFECTIVENESS OF AFAR LIBERATION FRONT.

3. ABOVE MUST BE BALANCED WITH FACT THT EPMG CONTINUING TO INCREASE SIZE OF ARMED FORCES AND IS RECEIVING INCREASED MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM COMMUNIST STATES. IN ADDITION, SINCE CHAIRMAN MENGISTU ELIMINATED HIS MAJOR RIVALS ON FEB. 3, HE HAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED HIS WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST INTERNAL OPPOSITION. WHILE OUTCOME OF HIS ACTIONS IS YET UNCLEAR, SAG SHOULD HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT MENGISTU WILL BE
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RELUCTANT TO REACT IF SAG TAKES LINE FURTHER SUPPORTIVE OF ERITREAN REBELS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE, PROVINCE, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, LIBERATION FRONTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ADDIS01636
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770094-0651
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770347/aaaaboua.tel
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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